

# Congressional Meeting "How To"

## Introduction:

- Greet the Member and/or staff with a handshake.
- Formally introduce yourselves by giving your name, where you are from, and that you are part of the Hydrocephalus Action Network.
- If you are a constituent of the lawmaker, you should mention this.
- If there is a large group of people, appoint certain people to discuss the issues around hydrocephalus.

## Explain Hydrocephalus and How it Relates to the Member

- Ask the Member and/or staff if they know what hydrocephalus is.
- They may not know what hydrocephalus is. Because of this, it is important to give an in-depth explanation of what the condition is, its prevalence, and how it affects the individual who has it.
- Share why hydrocephalus advocacy is important to you
  - For example, you may be motivated to spread awareness so there can be adequate funding for research that could find a cure.
- Give an explanation for why the Member should care about hydrocephalus
  - For example, it may be to represent the large amount of individuals with the condition in their district or state.
  - It may be because of the research taking part in their state or district

## Talk about the Specific Issues at Hand

- Explain the issue and how it relates to the hydrocephalus community.
- Explain why the Member should support the issue.
  - Support the argument by talking about personal stories.
- Ask for the Member's view on the issue.
- Ask if they can support the Hydrocephalus Associations Position.

## Conclude the Meeting

- Ask if they have any other questions that you can answer.
- Thank them for their time.
- Ask for the staffers card.
- Express that you would like to continue the communication with the office in the future.

- Ask about the best way to follow up from this meeting.
- Remember to leave them with the “leave behind” folder.

#### Do:

- Follow up through email.
- Be respectful and attentive.
- Try and limit your meeting the 30 minutes.
- Present your information clearly.
- Keep the topics of the interview limited. Bringing up numerous issues and bills may confuse the staffer and/or Member.
- Remember that your voice matters and that they care about what their constituents support.

#### Do Not:

- Arrive late to the meeting (arrive at least 10 minutes before).
- Get discouraged if the legislator themselves is not able to meet with you. A meeting with their staff can be just as effective.

### How to Conduct a Congressional Phone Call

1. Tell them your name, where you are from, and that you are a constituent.
2. Ask if you could pass the message along to the lawmaker.
3. Tell them about the issue that you are calling about
  - Explain its connection to the hydrocephalus community.
  - Use this connect to explain why the lawmaker should support the issue or bill.
4. They may ask for your address to confirm that you are in the lawmaker’s district.
5. Tell them that you would like a response from the lawmaker.
6. Thank them for their time.